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Botswana

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John A. Wiseman

Compiler



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This series, which is principally designed for the English speaker, will eventually cover every country (and many of the world's principal regions), each in a separate volume comprising annotated entries on works dealing with its history, geography, economy and politics; and with its people, their culture, customs, religion and social organization. Attention will also be paid to current living conditions – housing, education, newspapers, clothing, etc. – that are all too often ignored in standard bibliographies; and to those particular aspects relevant to individual countries. Each volume seeks to achieve, by use of careful selectivity and critical assessment of the literature, an expression of the country and an appreciation of its nature and national aspirations, to guide the reader towards an understanding of its importance. The keynote of the series is to provide, in a uniform format, an interpretation of each country that will express its culture, its place in the world, and the qualities and background that make it unique. The views expressed in individual volumes, however, are not necessarily those of the publisher.

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Introduction

When the Bechuanaland Protectorate became the independent Republic of Botswana on 30th September 1966 few observers would have been confident in predicting a successful future for the new state. During the colonial period it had remained a largely neglected part of the British Empire. For Britain the territory had a minor strategic importance but little else of interest and at independence it was one of the poorest and least-developed states in the world. Although its leader, Seretse Khama, was generally seen as a man of great strengths and virtues the country appeared to have little else acting in its favour and a sort of peaceful stagnation seemed the most optimistic prediction for this country. There was little to prepare even the most sympathetic observer for the transformation that was to follow in the next quarter of a century as Botswana became one of Africa's great success stories. The development of a stable and democratic state with the fastest rate of economic growth in the world would have seemed like a fantastic illusion in 1966. Many of the writings contained in this bibliography represent a record of this unexpected transformation.

Geography

The main physical characteristics of Botswana are that it is a large, landlocked, flat, arid, and sparsely and unevenly populated country. It occupies a land area of just over 224,000 square miles making it approximately the same size as Kenya or France. The Tropic of Cancer passes through Botswana and the northern part therefore lies within the tropics. Located in Southern Africa it shares borders with South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Zambia, although its border with the latter is a matter of dispute involving the location of a point in the Zambezi River. With the arguable exception of the latter this meant that at independence Botswana was entirely surrounded

Bibliographies and Libraries

- 721 **Bibliography of the Tswana language.**
Marguerite Andree Peters, Matthew Mathethe Tabane. Pretoria:
State Library, 1982. 175p.

This bibliography lists 1257 items published in Setswana up to 1980.

- 722 **Some problems of library development in Botswana.**
H. K. Raseroka. *Botswana Notes and Records*, vol. 10 (1978),
p. 91-94.

This article describes the development of the library service and the creation of fifteen branch libraries in the first decade of independence. It notes that the branches are mainly confined to the east of the country and that the holdings of the library service are beyond the reading level of a majority of the population.

- 723 **Essays on the history of Botswana. A bibliography of history research essays presented in part fulfilment of the B.A. degree of the University of Botswana, 1976-1984.**
Kevin Shillington. Gaborone: Department of History, University of Botswana, 1984. 38p.

This pamphlet lists, by author and title, the research essays produced by undergraduate students at the University of Botswana.

Indexes

There follow three separate indexes: authors (personal and corporate); titles; and subjects. Title entries are italicized and refer either to the main titles, or to other works cited in the annotations. The numbers refer to bibliographic entries, not to pages. Individual index entries are arranged in alphabetical sequence.

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